



The McGill Daily Literary Supplement



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Of Universities Mediaeval and Modern

I.—UNIVERSITY TRADITIONS AND ORIGINS

EVEN nowadays universities tell stories about the men who founded them, but as a rule they are poor stories, for we are prosy people to-day, and have become ashamed of our imaginations. It is difficult to say how far, or how long, men of the middle ages believed the stories they told of the origins of their universities, or of anything else for that matter. Probably they did believe them, and if so, it is a good thing that they did not know enough to realise that the stories were not true, for they are vastly entertaining. In nearly all cases the supposed founder was some great man of note, as, for instance, Charlemagne at Paris, and of course, Alfred the Great at Oxford. The story of Oxford supposes that Alfred founded the University with the aid of certain veterans who had escaped from the siege of Troy, and a noted King Mempric, a companion of King David of Israel. Moreover all these were mighty men of valour, and knights to boot, as were all the mighty men of the times. Now, I submit that whether this is all true or not is a matter of small import, and I feel that we, on our part, have carried the mania for truth to a ridiculous length in exploding such ideas, and preserving the traditions of our own universities, naked of romance. I would suggest that we remedy the deficiency. Surely some intelligent young man, with plenty of spare time, could suddenly discover that our James McGill was Christopher Columbus, mysteriously clothed in an alias. We also might draw in some of the more famous figures of antiquity. Would it not enhance our importance in our own eyes to claim connection with Julius Caesar? And is it not likely that John, sickened with the nauseating taste of the rushes of Runnymede, forthwith fled to a new continent to reform his life, and show his penitence by patronising learning? Of course we should be behind the times if we represented these notables as knights in arms, for the knight of to-day is no longer in arms, but in business. So that to Columbus naturally falls the first presidency of the United States, while I feel sure that Julius Caesar might claim the first railroad, and John, as his base-ness befits, the first discovery of gold.

All this is as it may be, and no university with a corporate sense of humour can now fail to act upon my advice. As a matter of fact, however, universities happened in the first instance, and were not founded until somewhat later times. Just before the beginning of the 12th century an increased interest in law and order came over Europe, as well as other changes of a more intellectual nature, and as a result of the former, certain men who had acquired a knowledge of the old Roman law, which was preserved to some degree in Italy, began to teach it to any who wished to learn, in their native city of Bologna. Since there came thither students from all over Europe, for in those times there were no commercial magazines to desire the erection of tariff

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Oxford Advises The Freshman

THE following article which appeared recently in an Oxford undergraduate weekly offers some fine advice to one first coming to a great institution of learning. An exhortation to freshmen informing them that they are arriving at a kind of madhouse, may be as suitable for the perusal of the first year men at McGill as of those at Oxford. It concludes with a happy exhortation to jollity and mirth, an invitation to carnival which we would like to extend to all innocent Freshmen here—and, beyond them, to knowing Sophomores, important Juniors, and staid Seniors.

TO THE FRESHMAN

YOU are arriving at a kind of National, or International Madhouse, and you must look toward finding the inmates mad. Indeed a man must be slightly insane if he willingly undergoes the laws of this place whether formal or informal. Who but a madman would spend three years learning what he does not intend to remember in order to tell three little old men what they already know? And most of those years are spent in forgetting why we are here. You yourself, though you may intend

The Dryad

SHE'S tall and stately and dressed all in green,
As like a young poplar tree as any girl I've seen,

And the little winds of April have mistaken her for one
As she stands on the hill top in the rain and sun;

They ruffle up her dresses and show a frill of white
That flutters like a poplar's leaves, dazzling to the sight—

But oh, I'm glad her beauty means nothing more to me
Than the wind among the leaves of a tall poplar tree!

—J. G.

to work, will find a seat of learning to be a very comfortable chair to sleep in; and much study is like little study, inasmuch as both tend to make the student farm out his intellect upon his tutor so that he may have more time to gather facts as a child gathers limpet-shells and on the last day of the seaside holidays throws them out of the window. . . .

You will find Oxford a long chain of tea-parties, at which your friends will be presented either by themselves or by others in a strange new light. You will find all the world grown suddenly more mature and perhaps a little more coarse. But as you yourself grow more mature you will forget this, and seek intelligence above all things. But you must not expect to be wise too soon. You must put on the Jester's Cap before you are worthy to wear the Bachelor's Hood: otherwise you will remain a poor unofficial fool all your days. Drink what you will, wear what you will; think what you will; dare what you will. If you are interested, talk the sun up about the old disputes of art and fate and truth and beauty. Lie in bed till it is tea-time if your scout will let you, and it is your wish. Live on bananas and cream for six days. Bind your soul to the River-Devil in an infamous contract he will woo you to him with an irresistible smile and much blarney, so that in return for the

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Junk: a Defence of Jazz

S. Fels

THE over-educated musician decided to patronize an orchestral recital given by Mr. Paul Whiteman, and again he was fortunate enough to secure a seat next to mine. The orchestra started: their first number was "Monkey Doodle". While I swayed to the forceful rhythm of the music and my memory wandered to the dance last night, especially that fourth fox-trot, this ubiquitous person beside me uttered the word "Junk!" My usual horror overcame me; I rushed with pen, ink and paper (mostly paper) to the defense of the much-insulted, much misunderstood jazz.

Music is the art of making combinations of intelligible tones into compositions of definite structure and significance according to the laws of melody, harmony and rhythm. In its melody, music (as it appears on the staff) as viewed horizontally is composed of a single series of tones; in its harmony, music is considered vertically; in its rhythm, tones are considered in movement as conforming by means of accents and phrases to a definite time pattern. And, in all these three essentials, especially the

in jazz is explained by the natural tendency to accent the first and third beats; and when these accents are missing the body moves to replace them and we get motion, just (as we learn in physics) as everything moves to fill up a vacuum. Our classical composers used syncopation sparingly, for its effect was considered too violent, yet it is so strong and driving that it is never tedious. Beethoven, braving the hostility of the old school, made frequent use of it with magical effect. See for example the first movement of his second symphony, an episode in the first movement of the "Eroica" and many passages in the finale of the Appassionata Sonata.

There is another sort of rhythm essential to music, besides the placing of accents in each bar, rhythm of phrase, that is to say, the different sentences making up the music must be balanced; for music, like poetry, is composed of sentences with periods and commas. The simplest form of rhythmically balanced group is the following:

- Sentence of a certain number of bars stating the theme.
- Sentence of an equal number of bars balancing A
- Sentence of a certain number of bars opposing A and B
- Sentence of an equal number of bars balancing C
- Sentence of same number of bars as A and B and balancing them.

This is equivalent poetically to the form known as the Limerick of which the following is a relevant and significant example:

- There was an old man of Tobago
- Who lived on rice, gruel and sago
- Till much to his bliss
- His doctor said this
- To a leg, Sir, of mutton you may go.

In most jazz music the chorus (the only dependable part of jazz) follows out this plan exactly. Take "Linger Awhile" for example:

- The stars shine — — — — —
linger awhile (eight bar sentence stating main theme)
- They whisper — — — — —
linger awhile (eight bar sentence balancing A)
- And when you have gone away (four bar sentence)
- Each hour will seem a day (four bar sentence balancing C)
- I've something — — — — —
linger awhile (eight bar sentence balancing A and B).

If you will sing the music corresponding to the above words to yourself (preferably) your ear will convince you of this balance. We see the same form in, "What'll I do," "My Lovey Came Back," "Every Night I Cry Myself to Sleep over You," "Driftwood." Other forms used are, eight sentences such as in "Limehouse Blues," "The Sheik," and a novel form quite different from others in "Lazy," but all are perfectly balanced.

Then there is melody, the horizontal succession of notes pleasing to the ear which those of us who don't read the write-ups of musical concerts in the "Star" call "tune." Most jazz has but one melody, that stated at the

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last, jazz shews its rightful claim to be called music (without the accompanying sniff).

Rhythm is the life-blood of music and drives it on just as accents put movement into poetry. Jazz has rhythm; its very purpose, to incite our laggard feet to the imitation of the antics of a fox, makes this essential.

There are four notes, or their equivalent, to each bar of a fox-trot. Now if we look at the left of the first line of the chorus we shall see in most cases the sign c. This signifies that the correct accent of these four notes is as follows: 1 2 3 4, but if any pianist were to commit the atrocity of playing jazz music in that manner he would forcibly be told to go home if he wished to do practising. He would be replaced by a real player with a cheerful countenance and a big left hand which would crash along in a monotonous rhythm striking the odd correct chord once in a while, while at the same time, his right hand, when not engaged in running chromatic scales up and down the keyboard, would bring out the music with the accent placed in this manner: 1 2 3 4 or more usually 1 2 3 4-1 2 3 4 and everyone would be happy. This accenting of the weak beats of the bar i.e. the second and fourth beats, is what is called syncopation. That this is so much in place

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McGill and the Community Players

In an editorial which appeared on November the 4th, just too late to be noticed here last week, the Gazette has some significant and provocative things to say about McGill's duty to encourage dramatic art in Montreal, and in good plain terms accuses the university of neglecting that duty. The *raison d'être* of this charge is not, as might have been expected, the lack of any serious dramatic activity at the university, but concerns itself with that little group of sincere enthusiasts, the Community Players, who for the past four years have provided perhaps the only bright chapter in the dramatic history of Montreal. The Community Players have now reached a crisis in their career. Unable to obtain even the simple room in which they successfully carried on last year, and without any reasonable expectation of being able to raise the funds with which to secure an adequate and suitable theatre, the organization is reluctantly forced to suspend its activities "unless or until, more propitious auspices develop."

After discussing the successful Hart House Players in Toronto whose distinctive work has been made possible both by the enlightened private philanthropy which placed at their disposal an elaborately equipped Little Theatre in Hart House at the University of Toronto, and by the practical and substantial support given the players by the undergraduates and staff of the university, the Gazette goes on to say:—

"The question naturally suggests itself: Why should not McGill University assume more of the responsibility for the continuance and encouragement of the Community Players? It may not be possible to provide a theatre as complete in all details as that at Hart House, but somewhere among the numerous buildings of McGill there should be found a space capable of adaptation to the not overly-exigent requirements of the zealous workers of the group. The personal interest of more members of the faculty, the graduate body and the under-graduates should also be manifested. Some of the professors have been commendably assiduous in the movement, lending their service in various capacities and swelling the lists of subscribers, but they are few in comparison with the number who should be found supporting a movement which deserves so well of the great University. The Gazette from time to time has had occasion to point out that McGill is not guiltless of the charge of neglecting the art of the drama in its contemporary manifestations, for some of the finest productions of the current stage have played to audiences which were no credit to a centre of education, art and culture such as Montreal prides itself on being. A spontaneous move on the part of the University to back up the Community Players might perhaps encourage some men of means to come forward with offers of financial support which would allow the organisation to carry on. Surely the maintenance under the aegis of the University of a coterie of enthusiasts for what is most vital in the drama would be as worthy, though perhaps not so spectacular, an accomplishment as the development of a winning football team."

These are not creditable reflections on our university, but coming from so reputable a journal as the Gazette, they demand our serious consideration. We should like to have seen someone among us come forward with a refutation and a vindication. This has not been done.

Nevertheless we are not altogether and unreservedly ready to plead guilty to the charge of neglect. Several undergraduates have taken part in the productions of the Community Players, in some cases not in minor roles. A good proportion of their audiences has been drawn from university circles. We think, however, that the charge of neglect will shortly become less well-founded. The questionnaire held by the Students' Council at the beginning of the term has revealed the fact that there are three hundred students here who are deeply interested in the drama, a large number of whom have had experience in the acting and producing of amateur plays, and a meeting is shortly to be called for the purpose of forming a dramatic organization which should at once undertake the production of some worthy modern plays.

While in the position to do no more than voice an opinion, we might suggest that the "spontaneous move on the part of the University to back up the Community Players" which is desired by the Gazette might take the form of an invitation to the players to co-operate with a student organization, and make use of whatever stage the students are able to secure at McGill. We have sufficient faith in our university to believe that if the Community Players became in any way connected with a college organization they would be granted a measure of support from students and alumni that would make their ventures a financial, as well as an artistic success. The latter, they have almost always been in the past, and that the lack of an adequate theatre should prevent us having any more of them must be a source of some humiliation to all lovers of the drama in Montreal.

FOILED!

Graeme Taylor

THERE was nothing else for it: Aunt Agatha would have to go. Cecily had scarcely left me, and her graceful figure could still be seen as she went blithely on her way down the street as I first dumbly realized that I would be finally forced to come to this decision no matter how little I relished the prospect. In spite of what old-fogies say about the young men of to-day we are not total brutes and we still manage to preserve some sentiments of an old-fashioned chivalry.

Not so the girls, however. All the old cranks who ever nursed a hot-water bottle could say anything they chose about the modern girl as far as I was concerned. Was not Cecily a fair sample of the modern girl and who but Cecily had caused me all this mental anguish? The modern girl could not possibly be malign. They were trouble makers, all of them.

Take Cecily for instance. She had bounced up to me in the street and had greeted me radiantly. Somehow Cecily's lips seemed exceptionally fascinating with their thin, carmine lines which shaped themselves into all manner of charming forms. Suddenly I had heard myself asking her to go out to dinner that very night. Of course she agreed: I have always found Cecily far too agreeable.

All very nice, and no difficulty there! No difficulty? when my total negotiable pecuniary assets comprised eight jingling coppers and one of those large, new five-cent pieces, which if the eagle-eyed porter mistook for twenty-five cents could only serve to regain my hat from its temporary custodian. And I had had former experience with supper parties—and with Cecily.

I had to have the money, and the only way to get it was to dispose of Aunt Agatha. I resolved to do it, and silenced my Victorian conscience by putting the blame on Cecily. Then I went to the house and got Aunt Agatha.

For once my knowledge of Russian novels was of value to me. I had read of places in the slums of the great city where one went on occasions like the present. At one of those refuges where the flotsam and jetsam of civilization collect, places to which mention is so often made in the stories of Andreiev and Dostoevsky I would leave my beloved Aunt Agatha and receive in return sufficient money to take Cecily out. But I had no happy anticipation of the evening, for how would I be able not to feel the least bit guilty for what I had done?

Yet still I was going to do it, and as I took Aunt Agatha through streets which were each dirtier than those preceding them, my face wore a set, determined expression.

Yet for all that, when I entered the place I felt strangely uneasy, and for the first time since I had originated that plan I had doubts about the reception my offer of Aunt Agatha would receive. But I stated my purpose to the little dark-eyed man who came hurrying to greet me. And it was a terrible surprise to me and bitter disappointment when he showed no interest in my proposal. "Too old fashioned," he said, and displayed no further interest in Aunt Agatha.

Out in the street again my hopes revived, and when I came to the next place which looked as though it would have some use for Aunt Agatha I plunged in without any compunctions. It was dark inside, but when my eyes grew used to the dim

light I saw a lean wolf-like man rising up from a seat in the corner.

As soon as he perceived Aunt Agatha the man seemed to understand my presence in his premises and if he displayed no tremendous interest, at least he was less disinterested than the one to whom I had last applied. He drew closer and with his hands and eyes examined Aunt Agatha very carefully. I awaited his decision breathlessly.

Presently he grew quite excited over something. "Der back, der back," he kept repeating, thumping my Aunt Agatha on the back all the time, "in der back she don't oben!"

I expressed polite wonder at this discovery, and remarked that as I had never used Aunt Agatha, I was really not very well informed about such peculiarities.

The man evidently did not believe me, but he went on with his inspection—to my dismay, for I was angered by his conduct, and was moreover beginning to have doubts as to his intentions.

He began to speak: "Too old-fashioned, no demand for such kinds nowadays. Nod much use to talk. Besides vere is der lens?"

His last question surprised me, but I looked and saw that what he had said was true. I could only repeat my former observation that I had never taken any pictures with Aunt Agatha. I also explained to him how I happened to possess the camera, for I thought it better to do so since he might suspect me of having stolen it. It had been presented to me by a maiden aunt, many years before, and I had kept it as a remembrance of my dear Aunt Agatha after her death. The man smiled and waved me out.

If only I had never tried to sell Aunt Agatha, I wailed as I went back home. I would never have felt this shame for possessing an article so worthless that no pawn-broker would accept it. It had been Cecily—that devilish little Cecily. But I would have my revenge. I would not take her out that night; I would stay away without making any excuse!

The preposterous daring of my plan put me in a happy frame of mind. To leave Cecily waiting to be called for—the thing was unheard of—and what a splendid fellow I was to essay the feat.

With such delicious reflections I was jubilant when I reached home. And I had just settled down to chuckle over the chagrin which would fill Cecily's little soul within the next few hours when my pleasant reflections were interrupted by the ringing of the telephone.

It was Cecily telling me that she was so sorry, but it "was" in her engagement book that she had agreed to attend a dance out at the Yacht Club, so she "really" had to cancel her arrangement with me. I can't remember what I said in reply. Possibly I was speechless.

The Dumbells Come Again In Sixth Revue

LIKE the brook the Dumbells seem to go on for ever, and like the poem, they are becoming a little out of date. However, they are quite oblivious to the fact, and so was the large audience at His Majesty's last night which gave an enthusiastic welcome to Captain Plunkett's Sixth Annual Revue, "Ace High."

This year's edition follows the same general pattern as those which have gone before, but it seems on the whole to lack that final touch of snap that makes or fails to make a good revue. Some of the Dumbell shows undoubtedly had it, and there are places in "Ace High" that go with the old swing—but not enough of them. The standard favorites Red Newman, Al Plunkett, Ross Hamilton and Jock Holland are all back again in their old roles—Red as a cockney, Al Plunkett with his stumbling little laugh in the middle of a comic song sung otherwise with great and humorous solemnity, Ross Hamilton as Marjorie, and Holland as the Vamp. But the honours this time really rest with some of the others. First and foremost, with the Dumbells Orchestra, then with Stan Bennett and a newcomer, Pat Rafferty, and a "woman" by the name of Glenn Allan, whom I don't remember having seen before.

The Dumbells Orchestra under the direction of Captain Plunkett opens the second act, and was the bright spot of the evening. It is rarely in Montreal that we have an opportunity of hearing jazz played superlatively well. Paul Whiteman was here last year. Occasionally a really good orchestra comes to the Princess. Now the Dumbells have formed one among themselves. The influence of Whiteman is seen in the perfect co-ordination among the various parts of the orchestra, and sweet effective use of contrast between sweet and harsh, soft and loud.

Stan Bennett played the perfectly priceless old bean to perfection. The monocle, the vacant look, the cooty garage, the half open mouth and protruding teeth, the vague smile, the affected accent—it was the "lilly ass" done to the life. As a staff officer bent on maintaining discipline he was the saving grace of a rather boring skit called "A Canuck's Dream," while his song about the Hussars, and "My Word" provided some of the most amusing moments of the evening. Pat Rafferty's chief claim to praise is for his interpretation of a Spanish-Italian serenade called "Signora" in which he urges her to "put on your camisola, jump into my gondola, and hi-diddle-i-do with me." I heard this once before, in 1913, on the sands at Margate, but never again until last night. It is a good song, and Rafferty does it justice. Al Plunkett has some fairly good numbers, and a couple of pretty bad ones. There is a wretched sentimental "mother" song called "If I Can't Sing About my Mammy, I Won't Sing at All" for which he ought to face a firing squad at dawn. But then we think of such absurd foolery as "Shall I have it Bobbed or Shingled," and "Yum, yum, yum," and decide to commute it to life imprisonment. The "women's" voices seem to have something of their clear feminine charm, but Glen Allan, at least, looks and dances like a girl. His "Dance Oriental" would make a theolog feel passionate. There is a horrible pseudo-patriotic song called "Don't Let them Scrap the British Navy," but then, on the other hand, there is "Say it with a Ukalele." And so it goes. There is some second rate stuff, and a certain amount of first class matter, and a good deal that is quite passable. On the whole, it's a show worth seeing.

A.J.M.S.

Andree Pascal Scores Triumph In L'Aiglon

ROSTAND'S "L'Aiglon" has for some time been considered one of the classics of the modern French stage. Its fine declamatory passages, its poetic beauty, and the appeal of its central character, have given it a high place in the minds of actors and audience alike. This is strongly evidenced at the Orpheum Theatre this week, where the Porte St. Martin production is rousing capacity audiences to more than their usual amount of enthusiasm.

As a play "L'Aiglon" is far inferior to "Cyrano." As a vehicle for dramatic and interpretative acting by the central character, it is excellent. There is really only one important figure in the play, the young Duc de Reichstadt, weakling son of the great Napoleon. Virtually a prisoner at the Austrian court, he sees himself in imagination as his father's successor, Emperor of France, Napoleon the second. The fancy ends in death and disillusionment, but not before "L'Aiglon" has taken on something of the courage and the glory which he associates with the memory of his father—and incidentally not before we have been treated to a beautiful performance by Andree Pascal.

It would be extremely difficult to praise Madame Pascal's reading of the title role too highly. It is doubtful whether she has done anything better since she came to Montreal—and that is very high praise indeed.

In the eloquent plea for the restoration of the Empire, in the terrible vision of the battle of Wagram, in the pitiful death scene, she is equally successful. Her fine voice and her keen understanding of emotional values give to the rhymed couplets their full measure of beauty and grandeur.

The other characters are only of minor importance. M. Magnier gives us an interesting character study of Flambeau, the faithful old soldier of the Great Army, prepared to devote himself to the young Duke with the same zeal and wholeheartedness which he showed in the cause of Napoleon. M. Montis is the crafty Metternich, Chancellor of Austria, bitter in his hatred of Napoleon and of everything that brings back his memory. Jean Duval contributes a good portrait of the Emperor. As usual, the rest of the cast is excellent.

For many people, the enjoyment of the play was rather marred by the audience's insistence upon loud and prolonged applause at too frequent intervals. Every speech of more than six lines in length, and every reference to the restoration of the younger Napoleon to his father's throne, evoked the manifest enthusiasm of a great many of those present. Apparently the name of Napoleon is still a very potent one among the French-speaking people even in a Canadian city. Their enthusiasm was rather trying upon those who were interested in the development of the play. It seemed rather as if many of the actors shared in this annoyance at the constant interruptions.

"Montmartre," by Frondaie, was the offering during the second part of last week. Madame Pascal scored another triumph as the girl from Montmartre, born and brought up in its influence, and unable to keep away from it even in response to a great love. M. P. Almette shared in the honours of this production.

O. K.

The Realm of Music

Isa Kremer

AN audience which clapped and stamped and cheered and called for encore after encore at the conclusion of her programme paid a remarkable tribute to the charming artistry of Isa Kremer, the Russian balladist whose recital at the Orpheum on Sunday afternoon was an unqualified success. Miss Kremer's repertoire was a varied one, embracing ballads and folk songs in Russian, French, English, Italian and Jewish. The type of song ranged from the pathetic to the gay, from a courtly minuet of old France to a wild Russian peasant song, from a tender lullaby to a Yiddish drinking song. Miss Kremer is of an exceedingly pleasing personality, and has a voice, not powerful, not altogether sweet, but clear and ringing with a bell-like note that is very beautiful. In some of her rough country songs a suggestion of harshness creeps into her tone that is not out of place, and serves only to accentuate the beauty of her more tender numbers. But it is not her voice alone that is this artist's achievement. She is not solely a singer; she is an interpreter of songs. Every gesture, each movement of the hands, of the mobile face, eyes, lips, lends life and colour to her ballads. Sometimes she is able to throw an air of fairy-like enchantment over some song, as in her interpretation of Brockway's "Little Sparrow" where she seems to recreate the pitiful figure of the betrayed and forsaken maiden of romance crooning a heartbroken little love song as she plies her needle. The prick which she gives her careless finger at the end is a concluding note of genius. One of the most popular of her Jewish numbers—and these seemed most familiar and pleasing of all to Sunday's audience—was "Lechaem rebenu", something in an altogether different vein. This is a drinking song in which the faithful Jews sing to the Rabbi at the Sabbath night supper, and as the song progresses, the singer is gradually overcome with wine, and ends in incoherence and inarticulation. It was a masterly piece of work, with a pleasing flavour of irony like a priest getting drunk at Communion. It was received with laughter and applause. Among the other of Miss Kremer's most pleasing numbers were "Le Petit Navire," a delicate and haunting cradle song from France, Paisiello's lilting gypsy song, "Chi vuol la Zingarella," and the German "Phyllis und die Mutter." Moussorgsky's "Hopak" and "Rimsky-Korakoff's "Song of the Shepherd Lehl" were representative songs of the modern Russian composers rendered in the first case with the wild abandon, and in the second, with the airy charm appropriate to their themes.

Leon Rosenbloom, Miss Kremer's accompanist, demonstrated his fine feeling and mastery of technique in Rachmaninoff's Prelude in G sharp minor, and a Liszt Polonaise, but most of all in Chopin's Fantaisie in F minor.

The recital was a pleasing one in every way, and Miss Kremer and her accompanist thoroughly deserved the splendid reception they received.

—A.J.M.S.

Clever Skit & Dancing Act At Princess

AT the Princess this week there is what I consider one of the best vaudeville skits that has been seen in Montreal; certainly it is the best of the skits that have come to the Princess this season. This is a comedy in four scenes written by Edgar Selwyn. Wellington Cross has the leading part and the other three characters are almost as adequately portrayed as is the principal—which is no small praise. "Anything Might Happen," as the act is called, is a very funny, very clever, and very well-constructed little comedy. Wellington Cross besides giving an exhibition of whimsical charm in "Anything Might Happen" proves himself a popular monologist. One of his brightest sallies were "I didn't say that you danced like a heifer, I said like a zephyr."

If "Anything Might Happen" is vaudeville of the society comedy type then "Music and Visualizations" is of revue calibre. Maryon Vadie, a danseuse, and Ota Gygi, a violinist, are the leaders and are backed up by six lithe girls of more pleasing and recent vintage than the customary vaudeville dance artists. The settings in this number must be commendably commented upon; the general effect of scenery and lighting in some dances is even apt to take attention from the performers.

Carlton Emmy directs a dog act which in spite of the fact that it caused an elderly lady sitting behind me to remark, "How sweet!" is quite unusual and good. He ruins it all at the end, however, by reciting with great feeling a pathetic little abortion called "Somebody Poisoned My Dog." Before Mr. Emmy had perpetrated even the first verse I reflected that the poison could have been put to a better use.

Since Edith Clifford was too indisposed to appear at Monday's performance, there is no unfairness in saying that her act was somewhat crippled. But Mabel Leonard, the accompanist, played, and the gods were either lenient or empty.

Ed. and Tom Hickey have enough vitality to make a success out of material which shows that the Hickey boys take few chances with any untried means. But one of them has an expressive face and is adaptable to slapstick.

Bert Lahr of Lahr and Mercedes in "What's the Idea" is another vaudeville villain with sap-stick tendencies. His travesty of a policeman is very timely in Montreal, and is appreciated. Mercedes, while she makes no great attempt to do either, cannot sing or dance. She is fairly pleasing to the eyes and maintains a kind of bovine abstraction.

Instead of the acrobatic act which was announced on the programme, Col. Fred Lindsay, an Australian sportsman and game hunter, gave an exhibition with a stock whip.

Jim Baggert and Rose Sheldon presented "Enjoying Themselves" which they and perhaps a few others in the theatre may have done.

I must here confess that I missed the Canadian United News, Aesop's Fables, and the orchestral selections. I refuse to commit myself by saying whether or not I considered myself fortunate.

—W. G. T.

Studies in Murder

Edmund Lester Pearson

Published by the Macmillan Company.

THE difficulty of commenting on a work of this sort is very great, for the book is really a number of different works. The only thing they have in common is their concern with murder — a very broad subject indeed. The fact of murder being the central incident in a narrative makes it no more akin to other narratives treating of the same thing than does love, the sea, or war. There are, however, a few fundamental principles running through "Studies in Murder."

This set of studies was written by E. L. Pearson, who is best known by his biography of Theodore Roosevelt. He has rendered a service to the reading public in many ways: first, he has brought before its notice the details of several murder cases, famous in their time, but now almost forgotten; secondly, he has put forth the details in a quite logical order, having first sifted them in regard to importance, and thirdly, he has expressed with the ease of an interesting and suggestive style what would otherwise be a series of lethal and legal minutiae, barren and bald.

Mr. Pearson is clearly pained by several things in connection with murder. He points out that the record for homicide is in the hands of his own nation (the United States), and suggests that this is due to the extraordinary amount of sympathy, on the part of the people, for one accused of murder, often resulting in his acquittal or a lenient sentence. In every well advertised trial all sorts of abuse are meted to the prosecuting attorneys, the defendant becomes an object of pity, and the murdered one is entirely forgotten; the judge receives threatening letters, and, if the culprit has belonged to a church or a missionary society, these organizations come to his aid.

Every case taken up in "Studies in Murder" has some special characteristic to recommend it to our attention. In the first account, which is the most interesting, and which occupies over half the book, a young woman of previously irreproachable character (in the words of the doggerel verse which became current during the trial) was accused of taking an axe and giving her mother forty whacks, "and when she saw what she had done, she gave her father forty-one." This is almost precisely what took place. A singularly cold-blooded piece of business, which scarcely anyone would credit as the work of this young Sunday-school teacher — albeit there was a vast heap of circumstantial evidence against her! There is also the account of a thrilling murder at sea — as a matter of fact, three persons were killed and two were, at different times, accused. The fantastical conduct of the first mate, who was afterwards convicted and sentenced, is both amusing and instructive. A most interesting part of this affair is the publication of several illiterate documents written by a Harvard Science student after the murders had taken place (this student was the only educated person on board). Other cases handled by Mr. Pearson are the wide-famed Nathan murder and the disappearance from a small New England village of a crazy man. In the latter case the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of murder. An arrest was made, and the poor fellow, who was accused, was so worked upon that he wrote and signed a most elaborate confession; then, towards the time of the accused's execution, the murdered man appeared.

In an apology for his book, Mr. Pearson says that in every case taken up there are points of importance which have never been unravelled — in some cases the whole crime is an

Of Universities Mediaeval & Modern

(continued from page one)

walls, nor any kings who thought seriously of making their subjects their slaves, Europe was freer, and men could move about from place to place without being suspected of plotting to overthrow national or industrial monopolies. This does not mean that artisans were not interested in their professions, and their professional rights, nor does it mean that citizens lacked the elementary desire to assert their right of freedom and self-government — the reverse, and since they were only beginning to be allowed to exercise these rights, they were distinctly jealous of them, and the host of external students, who soon came to Bologna to study law, met with some hostility from the townsfolk. Therefore, after the fashion of mediaeval man, they formed themselves into guilds, according to the several areas from which they came, and these guilds soon arranged a mutual understanding, and, as they increased in size, became proportionately more powerful. Finally they adopted the principle of collecting from their members a master's fee, which had originally been paid individually by students, to the masters. Thus they hired their own masters, and from this fact was determined the nature of these law universities. The students' guilds became a constituted university body, and regulated almost all the affairs of the university, except the actual academic standing, a privilege which, being fair-minded, they saw naturally pertained to the masters. It is interesting to note that the instruction in these student universities was always of a high order, and if we assume that that fact was connected with the desire of mediaeval students to study, we may see in it a desirability of students having a voice in the selection of their professors. In modern universities, unfortunately, most students are more interested in the vulgar pursuit of professionalised athletics. But we may still hope that, peradventure, there are a few righteous men left in Sodom, and it would altogether seem that these should be given a wide influence in all university affairs.

All this took place in the south of Europe; in the north there was the contemporaneous intellectual revival; but it was directed to the studies of arts and theology, and the great institution which grew out of it was, of a different nature, largely because it arose in the metropolitan city of Paris. Ever since the days of Charlemagne, there had been established in northern Europe, cathedral and monastery schools, and at the great cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris, the Chancellor found himself confronted with a large body of prospective students. For this reason he hired and licensed other teachers to help in instruction, and when these teachers became numerous, being foreigners, like the students of Bologna, they found it necessary to form themselves into a society and it was this society which, at Paris, became the university. We may note that this type of university, while vigorous in periods of general intellectual activity, tended at other times to become stagnant, and thus prove its inadequacy as a permanent institution. We, to-day, can well under-

stand this, for we have before us so many lamentable examples of the same thing. The truth is that in all places, and at all times, there are intelligent and vigorously-minded persons, both among professors, and among students, and for success in academic matters, it is essential that university-government should be influenced by both intelligent sections.

—ALAN LATHAM.

A Comparison of Constitutions

A Review

Federalism in North America by Herbert Arthur Smith, M. A., Professor of Common Law in McGill University. The Chipman Law Publishing Company, Boston, 328 pp.

THE study of comparative governments is, I believe, one of the most popular subjects at present offered to students taking a course in the so-called liberal arts. At many universities of note, where they have taken a sort of census, it was found to rank third favourite to Political Economy and Psychology. And it seems to be growing in popularity from session to session.

The increase in popularity of this study has caused an enormous number of books to be published on the subject—library shelves are becoming overcrowded with them. Most of them are exceedingly technical and involved, and as dry as the authors know how to make them; others make easy and even pleasant reading, but are hopelessly lacking in essential details. I think that Professor Smith's "Federalism in North America" has struck the happy medium. The book undertakes a comparison of United States and Canadian governmental institutions, and though the volume is somewhat small for its nature, it contains sufficient information for a student who is making even more than a casual study of the subject. Notwithstanding the author's hopes to the contrary, I think it will serve as an excellent short cut to an examination. If the examiner is anything but a crank, the man who consumes this book fairly thoroughly should score well in a test held on the subject.

But the great thing in favor of the book is that it is written in a style considerably superior to that which one has grown accustomed to expect in the average college text book. I am inclined to think that if you pick up the book when you are in a serious state of mind you will read more than half of it before you put it away—even if you are not a student of political science. And there is every chance that you may someday read the remaining portions of it too.

The Constitutions of both countries have been appended so that the student may without much trouble, search out any minute detail that has not been covered in the text. The volume should prove especially valuable for those who will be taking Course Six in the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Arts.

T. H. HARRIS.

LAUS VENERIS

SWEET is snow in summer for the thirsty to drink, and sweet for sailors after winter to see the garland of spring; but most sweet when one cloak shelters two lovers, and the tale of love is told by both.

Greek Anthology.

stand this, for we have before us so many lamentable examples of the same thing. The truth is that in all places, and at all times, there are intelligent and vigorously-minded persons, both among professors, and among students, and for success in academic matters, it is essential that university-government should be influenced by both intelligent sections.

—VEPSPASIANO.

Junk: a Defence of Jazz

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beginning of the chorus, for the rest is merely some twisting-about of this main theme. Simplicity is the basis of jazz melodies and a careful consideration will show that for the most part they consist in parts of a scale or are formed by breaking up chords. Thus the theme of "Gee! But I Hate to go Home Alone" is a few descending notes of the scale of E flat, of "Limehouse Blues" is three notes of a scale, of "The Sheik" and "Lovey, Come Back" are also developments of a scale and the haunting melody of "What'll I Do" if analyzed shows itself to be a mere breaking up of some very common musical intervals. Perhaps we compliment jazzy composers too much on their simplicity of melody, perhaps they can't help it. Nevertheless they deserve praise, for our greatest musician was a believer of simplicity of theme: the celebrated Scherzo of his Ninth Symphony has for its main theme one bar consisting of three D's repeated in a certain rhythm, the main subject of his Fifth (first movement) is founded on a chord as is also the theme of the much-played finale of the "Moonlight" Sonata. I'm sure that Beethoven would have smiled quite indulgently if he heard jazz.

Harmony, the last requisite, dresses up the melody so that it should not sound bare. It is here that jazz is weakest especially in piano music, for the composer is content to leave the bass, which is the harmony part of jazz music on the piano, in the form of octaves with a few scattered chords thrown in. But he may be readily excused for this as he must know that the player will gladly supply his own bass. As a matter of fact jazz music on being first published is printed on a slip of paper with the heading "Professional Copy" on it, and no bass at all is supplied! But we must remember that jazz is intended primarily for the orchestra, for which the music is usually skillfully arranged: the banjos and drums keeping up the definite rhythm of the music while the saxophone gives out the melody in imploring almost human tones, with a few rather musical padding-up passages and cross-rhythms supplied occasionally by the other instruments. This peculiar use of wind instruments found favor with Rimsky Korsakoff, Vincent D'Indy, Strauss and many other of our leading musicians.

So perhaps there's something even to jazz. And in addition to the above, it possesses certain qualities in which it quite surpasses its more reserved parent: it is short, truly a much appreciated quality, and most of us like it, which settles the question of its worth finally and absolutely.

Oxford Advises

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privilege of getting socially drunk at your college's expense at the end of term, you will sit on burning boards, whenever he commands you, clad in nothing but the winter wind and the raindrops. Sell your soul to the Bach Choir, or to the Cadena Cafe, or to the Hypocrites' Club, or to the O.U.D.S., or to the O.U. anything else. They will all charge you. But it does not matter what you do, provided only that you have some not anti-social means of expending your energy.

And what would be his message? To follow wisdom and know virtue? But wisdom is relative, and virtue only the direction of potential evil into symbolic channels. Therefore our message is, "Put your hand to the plough and it shall return again unto you; but sow your wild oats thickly and you shall return rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you."